

the future. And we—those in my age group—will be depending on those kids to take care of us when we are retired. We are a family. We better act like a family. We cannot afford to do these things that violate our family values.

Lastly, let me say how very proud I am that the Hispanic Caucus mirrors these values every day in their work. And let me encourage all of you who may be discouraged by what I have just said—and I left a lot of things out. They also have proposed, for example, that if an elderly couple has one of—the husband or the wife needs to go into the nursing home, they've proposed letting States require the one that's not in a nursing home to have to sell their house, their car, and clean out their bank accounts before the one who's in the nursing home can get any kind of help. I don't think that's right, either.

My idea of the America of the 21st century is a high-opportunity country where everybody has a chance to live up to the fullest of their ability. I do not want my child to get ahead by driving elderly people into poverty. That is not my idea of family values. That is not the right thing to do.

Now, I want to ask all of you, without regard to your political party or where you live or what your income is, in these next few weeks to urge the Congress to live by the values of Hispanic America, to decide by the values of Hispanic America, to lift up work and family, to work for more freedom and responsibility, to remember our obligations to our children and to our parents, and to remember the future belongs to the United States if we can just remember that we're a community, not a crowd.

Look at America and imagine what the world's going to be like in 20 or 25 years, the global economy, people moving around, technology, ideas, information moving around. There is no country in this world as well-suited to seize the 21st century as the United States, if we will just remember how we got to where we are: by being a community, not a crowd.

Thank you, and God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:50 p.m. at the Washington Hilton Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Giselle Fernandez, NBC News correspondent, and the late Willie Velasquez, founder, Southwest Voter Registration Education Project.

Exchange With Reporters Prior to Discussions With Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestine Liberation Organization September 28, 1995

Middle East Peace Process

Q. Mr. Chairman, do you think this will lead to a Palestinian state, this signing today?

Chairman Arafat. The most important thing, it will lead to a permanent and just solution and peace in the Middle East.

Q. But will it lead to a Palestinian state? You want a Palestinian state; you want a capital in Jerusalem. Is this a step in that direction?

Chairman Arafat. And we have expressed our—from the first day, we were talking with the Israelis, even during the Sadat period, when he was making his invitation with Mr. Begin.

Q. Mr. Chairman, are you worried about another outbreak of terrorism in the wake of this agreement, as there have been in the past? Are you worried about another outbreak of terrorism?

Chairman Arafat. Look, there are many enemies against this, the peace process, and for this, we call it "the peace of the braves." And we are in need of all our efforts and this extensive help to overcome all of these obstacles, including the terror and the oppositions on the two sides.

Q. Have you solved all the problems with the Israelis, particularly the date for a military pullout from—

Chairman Arafat. Yes, the last one has been informed to us from Mr. Dennis on the phone. And there is—there was a contact with Abu Alaa when we were in the meeting with His Excellency, Prime Minister Major, which were the most important points which had been changed—

Q. But all the issues have been solved?

Chairman Arafat. Yes.

Q. Including the—[inaudible]

Chairman Arafat. There is now—there is now a committee to finalize the whole situation.

Q. Mr. President, what is the U.S. policy on a Palestinian state? What is the U.S. policy, currently? What is the U.S. policy?

Q. President Clinton, could you maybe tell us how you defined the U.S. role in today's events and what transpired here?

The President. Well, we've continued to work to try to help the parties make peace and to help them reach their own agreements. And that is what they have done in good faith and with very difficult negotiations. And now that they have taken this other important step, as they take successive steps, we will try to make sure each step succeeds, that we build on it and we keep working until we have a just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East.

And I am very proud of the work that the Secretary of State has done, that Dennis Ross has done, and that the others involved in our team have done. But the credit here, the ultimate credit, belongs to the parties, to the Palestinians and the Israelis, who have been working through this in a very difficult way. We have said that our job was to support the peace process and to help make sure it succeeds once an agreement is reached. This is another important agreement. We'll do our best to make sure it succeeds.

[At this point, one group of reporters left the room, and another group entered.]

Q. Mr. President, do you think after this signing ceremony that you will be going to the Middle East and visit these peripheries, the Palestinian periphery, the Israeli periphery, the Egyptian

periphery, and the Jordanian periphery as well as Syria and Lebanon?

The President. I don't know the answer to that, but I know we will do everything we can to make sure these signing ceremonies are successful. We have worked very hard, the United States has, with your leaders, with the Israelis, with others, to try to help make peace in the Middle East and to try to help make sure each step along the way is successful. And we will keep working until we finish the job.

[At this point, a question was asked in Arabic, and a translation was not provided.]

Chairman Arafat. According to the agreement, they will be released, all—[inaudible]—on three schedules. The first one, directly after the signing of this agreement here, under his extensive supervision and after that, before the election. And the third one, later on.

[A question was asked in Arabic, and a translation was not provided.]

Chairman Arafat. The most important thing is we work together for the new history in the Middle East on the platform of comprehensive, lasting peaceful solution in the whole—[inaudible]—not only with the Egyptians, not only with the Palestinians, not only with the Jordanians. And also we hope that it will continue to be with the Syrians and with the Lebanese, too.

NOTE: The exchange began at 8:45 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. During the exchange, the following persons were referred to: Dennis Ross, Special Middle East Coordinator; Abu Alaa (Ahmed Qurei), chief Palestinian negotiator; and Prime Minister John Major of the United Kingdom. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Exchange With Reporters Prior to Discussions With Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin of Israel September 28, 1995

Middle East Peace Process

Q. Mr. Prime Minister, do you think this agreement today will be a step toward a Palestinian state?

Prime Minister Rabin. I'll answer questions later. We came to visit with the President. After the signing he will be able to ask questions. I prefer not to answer—not to respond to them at this stage.